

### Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 2 and 13 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, and 15 to read as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus comprising:  
an image reading unit having image reading means for reading an image;  
a first original carriage for carrying an original and for reading an original image in contact with ~~an~~ said image reading unit which is moving;  
a second original carriage for carrying an original and for reading an original image in contact with ~~an~~ said image reading unit which is in a stationary state;  
a stay provided between said first original carriage and said second original carriage;  
urging means for urging said image reading unit toward said first original carriage or toward said second original carriage;  
a guide portion, provided outside an image reading region, for guiding said image reading unit away from said stay when said image reading unit moves between said first original carriage and said second original carriage; and  
a member to be guided slidable relative to said guide portion when said image reading unit moves between said first original carriage and said second original carriage, said member to be guided ~~in~~ being disposed at a balanced position in a moving

direction of said image reading unit and is being substantially in line contact with said guide portion,

wherein said guide portion has a first inclined surface or first curved surface for moving said image reading unit away from said stay upon movement from said first original carriage to said second original carriage, and a second inclined surface or second curved surface for moving said image reading unit away from said stay upon movement from said second original carriage to said first original carriage.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein an angle formed between said first original carriage and a tangent line of said first inclined surface or first curved surface and an angle formed between said second original carriage and a tangent line of said second inclined surface or second curved surface~~[[,]]~~ are not more than 30°.

4. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1 ~~2~~, wherein said guide portion is in the form of a semicircular projection.

5. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said member to be guided is in the form of a circular shaft member.

6. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said guide portion is provided at each of longitudinal ends of said stay, and said member to be guided is provided at each of longitudinal ends of said image reading unit.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a shaft for supporting said urging means, and said image unit is provided with ~~with!! a through hole~~ through-hole, through which said shaft is penetrated.

8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said ~~through hole~~ through-hole has a thinner thickness at a peripheral portion than at the other portion ~~portion!~~.

9. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said member to be guided is disposed at a position at which a weight balance is established in the moving direction of said image reading unit.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said member to be guided is provided at a position where an urging force of said urging means is balanced.

11. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said member to be guided is disposed at a position where force applied by said guiding member is balanced.

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a product of a geometrical moment of inertia of said stay and a Young's modulus thereof is not less than  $6.5 \times 10^6$  kg.mm<sup>2</sup>.

13. (Cancelled).

14. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image reading unit includes projecting means for projecting light to the original and a lens for directing light reflected by the original to the image reading means.

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 1-14, wherein said image reading apparatus is usable with an image forming apparatus having an image forming means for forming on a recording material an image corresponding to an original read by said image reading apparatus.